Iron County News.

VOL. I. CEDAR CITY, UTAH. JANUARY 17, 1891. NO. 8

ALLEN GRAY;

— OR, —

The Mystery of Turley's Point.

Being a Few Romantic Chapters From the Life of a Country Editor.

BY JOHN R. MUSICK,

AUTHOR OF "WALTER BROWNFIELD," "HELEN LAKEMAN," "BANKER OF BEDFORD," AND OTHER STORIES.

CHAPTER XIV.

"D-E, YOU DOG!"

Allen was informed by signs that he was to remain at Mlle. Camille's house for a few hours, he supposed until he and his horse had had time to rest. A negro boy took the horse round the house to the stable, and the hostess, in polite French, which was Greek to him, invited the tired traveler into the house. The good lady, evidently some maiden relative of the little dumb boy, was in ecstacies at the arrival of the child, but not more delighted than the little fellow himself. His laughter, clapping his hands and dumb show indicated excessive pleasure.

Allen's arrival seemed to have been expected by Mlle. Camille and her servants. It seemed to him that she was standing in the door waiting for them. The mademoiselle was a pleasant-looking old lady, with large dark eyes and soft, iron-gray hair. She did not possess a single feature that indicated a distinct family resemblance to either Bertha or the child. Yet those tears and those emotions of joy at sight of the little dumb boy was proof positive that he was very dear to her.

"He is in good hands and will be well cared for," thought the editor, his heart relieved by an approving conscience.

He was ushered into the house by a mulatto boy, and conducted to the end of a long corridor, where the negro pointed to a room indicating that he was to occupy it.

"Can you speak English?" the tired traveler asked.

The mulatto shook his head, and then, showing Allen a bath, made him understand by signs that dinner would be ready for him as soon as he was ready for it. The tired editor found a good bath quite refreshing, and when he had dressed, donning the wrapper and slippers which were brought him, he felt almost himself again. The mulatto then conducted him to the dining-room in the basement at the rear of the house. Two colored waiters, who spoke nothing but French, brought him an excellent repast, to which he did ample justice.

When he had satisfied his appetite the same mulatto boy conducted him to a bed-room, where he was made to understand that he was to sleep and rest himself for awhile. He now remembered the sealed letter which the old woman had given him to bring to the mademoiselle, and taking it from his pocket sent it to her by the negro boy.

Having no other cares on his mind for the present, Allen threw himself upon the bed, and in five minutes was sound asleep. The exhaustion, mental worry and excitement, through which he had passed in the last few hours would have overcome any person of ordinary strength and powers of endurance.

After toil sweet is sleep, and no sleep so deep and refreshing as the sleep of exhaustion. The shadows lengthened, and the sun was just dipping behind the Western horizon when he was awakened by the mulatto boy.

Signaling Allen to rise, he handed him a sealed note, which contained instructions for his safe return. The note was written in English, in a plain, neat, lady-like hand, and Allen suspected that the directions had been written by Bertha herself and inclosed with the note which he had brought Mademoiselle who now sent it to him. At dark he was to start on his return, and he would reach a certain village ten miles from Turley's Point, where he was to remain closely concealed all day. At or near sundown he was to again set out for Turleys Point, reaching it after night. The horse he was to return and tie to the same tree at which he had found him.

"Umph, humph," said Allen, gazing at the writing and wondering if Bertha had penned those lines. "I suppose this affair is to terminate as mysterious as it began."

The mulatto informed him by signs that his supper was ready, and by the time he had finished it his horse would be waiting for him. Allen rose and went to supper.

He finished his meal in silence, and then by the same pantomimic motions, the boy informed him that his horse was ready. It was almost dark when he found himself once more at the side of that coal-black horse that had borne him so nobly on his long journey to Frenchtown. A day's rest and excellent care had removed all indications of evil effects of his hard travel.

Neither the child nor mademoiselle had been seen by Allen since morning, and no message was given him to return. He vaulted in the saddle, and the mulatto pointed to a road leading off through a grove of trees. This road went directly north from the village, and by following it he would, he knew, come into the main road a mile or two away from Frenchtown.

"They seem to fear that I am being watched," said Allen to himself, "and I suppose that the sooner I get away from here the better."

He gave his horse the rein, and the animal cantered away at a brisk pace.

It was a quiet night. The hum of insects and chirp of crickets along the wooded road made pleasant music for the lonely traveler. Though he had been considerably rested, his muscles, unaccustomed to the hard strain so recently put upon them, were bruised and sore. Had not his horse been an easy-going animal he could not have stood the journey. Being alone and unincumbered the return was much more comfortable than his ride of the night before.

The farmers were returning to their homes after their hard day's toil. The weary horses, now freed from the clanking chains, crunched their corn and oats at their stalls. As Allen cantered along the dusty road he envied the farmer, sitting on the door-step to cool his heated feet, the night of sweet repose that was before him.

The country was thickly settled, and for the first hour or two of his night ride he heard the low murmur of voices in and about the farm-houses. At one the weary plow-man sat on the front porch smoking his evening pipe; at another a pair of lovers were cooing upon the lawn; at a third two or three noisy children were playing prison house, their shouts and laughter making the weary traveler glad.

But anon the hum of voices and scenes of life died away. As night still more closely enwrapt the earth in her sable mantle a quiet repose fell over the scene and all became silence. The farmer had cooled his feet and was sleeping sweetly; the plow-man had smoked his pipe and retired; the lovers had separated with a parting kiss, and the merry childish voices were hushed in slumber.

Only occasionally was he aroused from his gloomy reveries by a restless dog running out into the road to bark at the passing stranger. Then he plunged into a great forest-covered valley, and the hoot of owls and screams of night birds grated upon his nerves, causing him to shudder.

Having only a forty-mile ride before him, and not wishing to enter the town before daylight, Allen allowed his horse to jog along quite leisurely, while his mind dwelt upon the strange events of the last few weeks, terminating in this most extraordinary journey. How was he to account for his strange absence, and would he be able to keep this visit a secret from the tall,

"DIE, YOU DOG!"

dark stranger? Somehow he felt that that tall, dark man, giving his name as X. Y. Z., was his enemy, and if he had been pursued he was one of the pursuers.

All night, over lonesome roads, through dark forests and along silent lanes the young editor continued his journey. When morning dawned he was in sight of the village where he was directed to stay.

He went to a small hotel, where he gave his horse into the care of the landlord, ordering the horse to be groomed and fed and that breakfast be prepared for himself. He slept most of the forenoon, but at two o'clock rose, and after a hearty dinner called for his horse.

"Which way are you goin'?" the landlord asked.

"Back home—up the river," he answered.

"Did ye come from up the river?"

"Yes, sir."

"Been out tradin'?"

"No, sir. I went to a town below here on some business, and I am now on my way back."

Glad to escape so inquisitive a man as the landlord was liable to prove, Allen paid his bill and mounting his horse galloped away in the direction of Turley's Point.

If he went straight ahead he would reach the Point long before night, which he did not wish to do; so, coming to a thick forest, he rode some distance into it, and there waited until the sun had gone down and the shades of twilight had begun to deepen, when he again resumed his journey.

Allen was almost worn out with his long ride at such unseasonable hours, and was very glad when he found himself once more in the vicinity of Turley's Point. It was still early, and not wishing to be seen by any one, he rode around the village, entering the old deserted turnpike some distance above it. Here it was so dark that he could scarce see an object three paces before him, but he managed to find the path, and took the horse to the very spot where he had found him, and tied him to the same tree.

He felt a great burden lifted from his breast. He seemed to be just awaking from a troubled dream. Cramped by his long ride, his stiffened limbs seemed hardly able to carry him to the village.

Danger was over; a few moments more and he would be in his bed resting from his toilsome journey.

Allen reached the turnpike, and had just stepped out of the narrow path into it, when a tall dark form sprang upon him. Before he could make an effort to resist, he was seized by the shoulders and hurled to the earth. A hand clutched his throat and a sharp bright blade glittered in the starlight above him, while a voice almost stifled with hate, hissed in his ear.

"Die, you dog!"

CHAPTER XV.

THE MAN WITH THE HORSE-WHIP.

Wholly unprepared for the sudden attack, Allen Gray was quick to think and equally as quick to act. His movements had to be with lightning-like rapidity to seize the wrist of the descending hand which held the murderous dagger, but once he had the arm he clung to it with an iron grasp. Next, with his hand that was free, he seized the hand of the would-be assassin, which was clutching at his throat until he was almost suffocated, and tore it loose. The assailant had one knee on the chest of the man he had hurled to the earth, but not knowing how strong he really was, the young fellow actually sprang from under him, and in a moment was on his knees. He clung with wonderful tenacity to the hand which still held the dagger, for he knew that it was certain death to release his hold.

The struggle was silent and desperate, for both were strong, determined men. While Allen's opponent was taller and heavier than himself, the latter had an advantage in activity and skill in wrestling and boxing. From their knees the struggling men rose to their feet.

The dagger fell to the ground and neither could get it. The contest became one of endurance. The men were fighting for life. They struggled, turned and twisted, and fought with maddened desperation until Allen finally struck his antagonist on the head. The blow staggered him, and another brought him to his knees.

Following up this momentary advantage, Allen struck three or four more blows and felled him to the earth. Enraged and furious at the sudden attempt on his life, the young editor seized the dagger which lay on the ground at his side, and raising the gleaming blade to drive it to the heart of his assailant, he cried:

"Now we'll see which dog shall die!"

A piercing shriek rose on the air, and a slender form clad in spotless white flew toward them and seized the uplifted arm.

"Oh, don't, don't in Heaven's name, don't murder him!" cried the beautiful girl, at whose solicitation he had gone to Frenchtown.

"Bertha—Bertha—you here!" gasped Allen, starting back in surprise, not unmingled with horror, when he reflected that he was about to take the life of a human being.

"Oh, spare him, spare him. In the name of the Virgin let there be no blood shed!" plead Bertha, wringing her hands in agony.

Allen stood transfixed and dumb with amazement, while the dark-whiskered man, to whom her appearance was not such an inexplicable mystery, rose to his feet and in a voice of suppressed thunder said:

"It is very kind of you to save my life after plotting so long to take it."

"Oh, Heaven—I never—never dreamed it would come to this!" groaned the beautiful girl, still wringing her hands in agony.

The master turned upon her much as a cruel father or master might upon a child or servant, and in a tone of muffled thunder said:

"We've had enough of this—go home."

In his excitement and rage Allen could distinguish a strong foreign accent in his language, which on ordinary occasions was not perceivable.

"Not while you threaten each other," she answered, sobbing bitterly.

"Why did you follow me! Did I not tell you to stay within ze house!"

"I know—I know; but if I had not come you would have been killed," she answered, still sobbing.

"It makes but little difference," he answered, with an oath. Turning upon Allen an eye which in the darkness blazed with the fire of an angry tiger, he said in a tone which trembled in its earnestness: "It would be better if you leave this country and never come back. Young man, you be very foolish, very rash not to have followed the advice of the village, and let the mystery of Turley's Point alone."

He wheeled about, taking the arm of Bertha, and was gone, leaving Allen gazing after them in wonder and amazement.

"Will wonders never cease!" he asked himself. "This strange mystery will drive me to madness, and how am I to solve it?"

He happened to think of the dagger which had doubtless fallen from his hand when Bertha had come so suddenly upon them, and thought he would take it, as it might prove a clew to this strange mystery. He stooped to pick it up, but it was no where to be found, it was gone. Where, how had it managed to slip away? Either the tall stranger or Bertha had taken the knife, and he was satisfied it could not have been the former. With all his soul on fire with jealousy, and torn and racked by a hundred conflicting emotions, he started down the hill toward the village.

"Oh, Bertha, Bertha, gone, left me without a word, after all I have done and suffered," he groaned, as he hastened to the village.

But Allen had schooled himself to bear his sufferings without a word of complaint, and next morning was in his office as usual. During his absence another issue of the paper had been published and circulated. He sat down at his desk and glanced over his mail. There were a few unimportant letters, one or two from old acquaintances, congratulating him on the success of his enterprise.

A smile curled the lip of the editor as he thought how far from success this venture in the newspaper business had come. To all inquiries about his absence he answered that he had been suddenly called away on business. Not a word of his strange adventure did he breathe to any one, and those who saw the young man sitting so calm and business-like at his desk never dreamed that he had come so near losing his life only the night before at the hands of the master of the stone house on the hill.

"Back again, are you?" said Miss Hopkins, with a smile on her shriveled face. "I am so glad you have come, for I really think I have a gem of a poem this time."

"What is the title?" Allen asked.

"*Love's Young Dream*," the old maid answered.

"Very touching indeed," said the editor, with becoming gravity, partially unconscious of what he was saying.

"Oh, sir, I have shed tears over it," said the ancient maiden, enthusiastically. "It was late in the evening, and tired of the toils of the day I had retired to rest, and as I lay on my bed thinking what I could do to advance the interests of the *Western Republic*—I am always thinking of you"—she parenthetically added, looking very tenderly at him—"I was suddenly seized with a desire to write. I believe—yes, sir, I verily believe that a voice called on me to write that poem. The voice of fame—"

"Please read it, Miss Hopkins." No editor in his sober senses ever asks an author to read his or her productions, so the reader can imagine how desperate was the condition of Allen Gray.

"Now, Mr. Gray," said the old maid, with a feeble attempt at a blush which failed, however, to appear on her powdered cheek, "do not say it is splendid unless you really think so. You are such a person to flatter, especially young girls."

Allen was too deeply, too painfully annoyed by the complications in which he found himself to observe the coquettish manner of the poetess, and with no other

"LOVE'S YOUNG DREAM," SHE ANSWERED.

object than gratifying an ambitious writer, he abstractly said:

"You write excellent poetry, Miss Hopkins."

"There, I knew I—"

"But let me hear your poem."

She unrolled her manuscript and proceeded:

LOVE'S YOUNG DREAM.

BY MISS LEETHY HOPKINS.

"So young, so gallant, brave and fair,
Dark gray eyes and auburn hair,
Sweetest treasure ever known,
Oh, my loved one, [illegible]
Would [illegible]
[illegible]
That this [illegible]
I would answer, I should say
On that happy, golden day,
When these charmed eyes first saw
That one whose will shall be my law.

"Go thou, to the song birds,
Speak to them of love,
Hear it whispered in the winds
Or the cooing of the dove—"

Allen, whose mind had really not been on the poem more than half the time, here asked her to whom she alluded.

"Oh, I won't tell," she answered, and another blush made a desperate effort to struggle through the rouge on her cheek. "Now I don't believe I will read any more to you."

"Leave it with me."

"Oh, not for the world."

"Don't you intend to have it published?" he asked, beginning to wonder why she had taken up so much of his time.

"No, no," she answered, holding the precious manuscript close to her heart. For a moment he gazed at her in astonishment, and then, before he was aware of what he was doing, remarked:

"You are a very remarkable girl."

Evidently putting a wrong construction upon his words and manner, she gasped:

"Oh, don't!"

Although Allen had read the history of that unfortunate gentleman, Mr. Pickwick, yet so much was he absorbed in the mystery of Turley's Point that he had only given a secondary thought to the poem, and still less to the conduct of the authoress, and wholly failed to discover the matrimonial twinkle in her eye, and was not caring to prolong the interview. He said:

"Very well, Miss Hopkins, if you do not wish me to use your poem I will not insist."

"Oh, well, then, you may have it, but I wouldn't give it to another person on earth," said Miss Hopkins, handing him the delicate little roll of manuscript.

"Are you partial to publishers?"

"Oh, hush!" and this time the blush managed to wash its way through. It is difficult to tell how far she would have gone, (for Miss Hopkins was arriving at an age that makes a woman anxious to marry, desperate), had they not been interrupted by a stranger.

It was a man, holding up the front of his flapping broad brim hat with one hand, while the other held a horse-whip of the *blacksnake* kind.

"Whar's the editur?" he roared, in a voice of thunder.

"Oh, dear!" screamed Miss Leethy Hopkins, in a paroxysm of fear, springing up from the chair where she had been sitting and getting ready to faint.

"Whar's the editur?" the stranger again yelled, bringing down one foot with a stamp that made the building ring. "Show me that ar editur, I say—whar's the editur?"

"Oh, don't — don't — please don't," screamed Miss Hopkins, to whom a golden opportunity now seemed to open. She could immortalize herself and gain the love of this publisher at the same time. This was the invincible man with the horsewhip, come to demand satisfaction of the editor.

"I WANT TER SEE THE EDITUR."

Every body has heard of "the man with the horsewhip;" many editors have formed his acquaintance, and it is useless to say that this individual is thought by many to be an indispensable check to editors.

"Git out o' my way, gal—whar's the editur?" roared he of the horsewhip, dancing in his fury.

"Oh, don't, don't, don't!" screamed Miss Hopkins, wringing her hands and falling upon her knees before the enraged countryman. "Oh, spare him; spare him this time; for my sake spare him!"

"I won't do it, I won't. Whar's the editur? I'm er goin' to hoss whoop him, I don't keer ef it's at a funeral!"

Allen, who had been standing cool and apparently unconcerned over since the arrival of this stormy stranger, now spoke up for the first time."

"We will excuse you, Miss Hopkins," he said, as calmly as if some ordinary matter was under discussion. "Leave me with this man; he undoubtedly has some business to transact."

"Ye bet I hev. It's important, too, an' I'm anxious to git at it."

"We will excuse you, Miss Hopkins."

"Oh, I will faint!"

"Get out in the open air and you will feel better."

"But, oh, dear, I am so afraid——"

"No one intends hurting you—excuse me, but I must be alone for a short time."

He opened the door as he spoke and Miss Hopkins, sobbing and whispering, left the office.

"Be seated, sir," said Allen to the in- farmer, who stood somewhat

"I want to see

"You shall see him,
for you to be in such
hurry. Be seated."

With a growl something
an oath, the man thre
chair, and Allen, with amazing
asked:

"Now, sir, what do you want to be the editor for?"

"I want to wear out this hoss whoop on him," roared the enraged husbandman, bringing the whip with a savage whack down upon the desk. "I am mad; I tell ye I am mad, and when I git riled I eat mountains."

"You are mistaken, sir; you are not half so mad as you think," Allen coolly remarked. "Tell me why you are mad!"

"That piece—that piece in yer paper about me—that I misrepresented, slandered and lied on Sam Herrin 'bout the corn knife." For the first time Allen now recognized the enraged man as George Leeper, his former correspondent from Billy's Creek.

"Well, Mr. Leeper," said Allen, folding his arms very quietly, "there was a misunderstanding between us on that matter, you know you told me it was all a harmless joke, while Sam Herrin says it was a malicious slander."

"Sam lied!"

"Well, he is the man you want to see then. I published your representation of the matter; and, at his request, published his, which was only just and right that the public may draw their own conclusions. Now, as to the editor for whom you are looking, you met him on your former visit, and he has not changed so much that you need fail to recognize him. But I really think the proper thing for you and Sam Herrin to do is to settle your disputes yourselves and not be dragging them the newspapers."

Having given this wholesome advice editor coolly turned to his desk and began writing. For several minutes George Leeper sat glowering about the office like a baffled tiger; then rising, he said:

"I want my paper stopped."

"Is your subscription paid?" Allen asked, taking up a large book and opening it.

"I paid half a dollar on it, an' I swar I won't pay a nuther cent. I don't want yer paper any more, nuther.

"It's against all rules to stop a paper until the subscription is paid in full."

Allen went on writing as if the violent dancing and cursing at his back did not disturb him. This subsided in a moment, and he heard the ring of a silver dollar on the desk at which he was writing, the door slammed spitefully, and the man with the Turley's Point, left the office scratching his head in perplexity and wondering how he was to get even with his enemy, Strong. He was not so anxious to be elected himself as he was to beat Streng. He had only got one block from the printing office when he saw his enemy entering it.

"There, now he's goin' in there to lay plans to bust me up; I know it," said Simmons.

Allen had scarce got rid of one of the Turley's Point politicians, and turned again to his desk, when the door of his sanctum opened and Mr. Strong burst in.

"I swar, things hev got to come to a fo-